

CASE STUDY

Driving Environmental Impact Through Daily EVS Operations

Providence Saint John's Health Center, Santa Monica, CA

Providence Saint John's Health Center (PSJHC), part of the Providence Health network, has long been committed to aligning operational excellence with environmental stewardship. The Environmental Services (EVS) team has made sustainability a cornerstone of daily operations, leading with staff engagement and continuous improvement in eco-conscious practices.

The Challenge

Hospitals face unique sustainability challenges—balancing infection control, patient safety, and operational efficiency while reducing environmental impact. At Saint John's, the EVS department recognized opportunities to reduce waste, optimize product selection, and improve compliance with systemwide sustainability goals.



Objectives

- Commit to diverting more than 50% of waste from landfill or hazardous streams by 2030.
- Reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates
- Lower resource consumption (chemicals, batteries, energy)
- Support Providence's overall goal of a **75% medical device collection rate**
- Achieve high performance on EVS compliance and sustainability reviews

Initiatives & Programs

Sustainable Product Transitions

- Replaced all hand sanitizer units to eliminate battery waste, reducing hazardous materials and maintenance costs.
- Prioritized procurement of **green-certified cleaning agents and low-emission equipment** wherever feasible.

Recycling & Waste Diversion

- **Cardboard Recycling Program:** Partnered with Republic Services to establish consistent cardboard recycling across facilities.
- **Commodity Separation:** Introduced single-stream recycling in one staff-controlled pilot area, with plans for phased expansion hospital-wide.
- **Medical Device Collection Contest:** Engaged staff through friendly competition, boosting device collection rates by **15%**, supporting Providence's network-wide 75% goal.

Training & Engagement

- Embedded sustainability principles into EVS onboarding and ongoing education.
- Regular "Green Rounds" and team check-ins to identify new opportunities for waste and energy reduction.

Compliance & Performance

- Achieved a **102.2% rating** on the EVS operations review, reflecting outstanding adherence to environmental and operational standards.
- Maintained full compliance with Providence's sustainability and waste management policies.

Outcomes

- Increased use of sustainable and green-certified products, showing consistent year-over-year growth.
- Improved microfiber laundering efficiency, reducing chemical use and environmental impact.
- Expanded staff training hours focused on green practices through ongoing Green Team initiatives.
- Increased waste diversion from landfill through expanded recycling and medical device recovery efforts.
- Greater adoption of low-emission and battery-electric equipment across EVS operations.
- Achieved measurable cost savings through reduced chemical and waste usage, with continued optimization expected.
- Maintained 100% compliance on sustainability and EVS audits.
- Strengthened overall sustainability culture and contributed directly to hospital-wide environmental performance goals.



Recognition

The facility was honored with the **Practice Greenhealth “Greenhealth Partner for Change Award,”** recognizing superior environmental performance across multiple sustainability categories. This award highlights Saint John’s as a model site within Providence’s sustainability network.



Critical Success Factors

- Small, daily operational changes—like product swaps and targeted recycling—compound into measurable environmental and cost impacts.
- Staff engagement is critical; competitions and visible feedback loops build momentum.
- Collaboration with vendors (e.g., Republic Services, linen suppliers) creates scalable systems for sustainable waste management.

Future Directions

- Expand single-stream recycling hospital-wide.
- Track and publish annual sustainability performance metrics.
- Increase use of battery-electric or low-emission cleaning equipment.
- Continue fostering a culture of accountability and innovation within EVS operations.

Through focused leadership, daily diligence, and a culture of sustainability, Providence Saint John’s Health Center’s EVS team demonstrates how operational departments can drive significant environmental impact. Their achievements showcase a practical model for embedding sustainability into healthcare operations—earning both measurable results and well-deserved recognition.

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